

APEGA — THE ROLE & CHALLENGE

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PUBLIC

APEGA's mission is "We serve the public interest by regulating the practices of engineering and geoscience in Alberta, by providing leadership for our professions, and by upholding our members in their professional practices." Its main responsibility of ensuring that the public receives high quality professional service is carried out by setting standards that must be met by those wishing to practice.

DIRECTED BY PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

APEGA's strategic direction is set by a Council of 16 elected professional members and 3 government appointed public members. A permanent staff of over 70 is responsible for the operational aspects. In addition, nearly 500 member volunteers support Council and staff in carrying out their responsibilities through committee and branch work. This work is further supported by a budget of approximately \$12 million which is met exclusively through member fees.

FUNDAMENTAL LEGISLATIVE FUNCTIONS

Through government legislation, under which APEGA was created, the Association is charged with the responsibilities of registration, discipline, enforcement and the setting of practice standards.

Registration

The Board of Examiners sets the education and experience standards that all applicants must meet. Knowledge of professional law and ethics is tested, proficiency in the English language must be demonstrated and the character of the applicant will be determined. Organizations engaging in the practices of engineering and/or geoscience are registered as permit holders.

Discipline

The Discipline Committee responds to complaints lodged against APEGA members alleging unskilled practice of the professions or unprofessional conduct. All complaints are investigated and, if warranted, cases are brought before a panel of peer judges at a formal hearing. Discipline sanctions include de-registering, suspending, levying fines, restricting a practice and assessing the costs of the formal hearing.

Enforcement

The Enforcement Committee identifies and investigates individuals and firms, who are not registered with APEGA, who practice engineering and/or geoscience or who use these same titles which are protected by legislation.

Practice Standards

The Practice Standards Committee develops and publishes guidelines in all areas of professional practice which have a direct bearing on the quality and value of professional services to the public.

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Believing its responsibilities extend beyond those dictated by legislation, APEGA initiates programs directed at member development and public awareness. The Association preserves a strong professional influence by interacting with Alberta universities, industry and government.

Member Services

- workshops, seminars and meetings are staged to facilitate professional development

- committees provide a working forum to sharpen management, communications and human relations skills
- salary surveys and employment advisory services help individuals plot their career progression
- awards honour the three professions' highest achievers and provide incentives for excellence
- university continuing education programs respond to professional needs identified by APEGA
- members may participate in CCPE sponsored group auto and homeowner insurance, life and liability insurance and registered retirement savings plans
- the PEGG newspaper and other publications keep members informed on matters of professional value and interest.

Public Involvement

- liaison with post-secondary students in engineering and/or geoscience clarifies APEGA's procedures, functions and requirements
- career counselling allows youth to make knowledgeable choices based on accurate information
- scholarships provide students with financial assistance and recognition in their pursuit of an engineering and geoscience degree
- APEGA responds to requests for the professions' view on relevant issues of public concern
- parameters of engineering and/or geoscience services are defined to users through various communication programs.

STEADY GROWTH SINCE 1920

Since its incorporation in 1920 to regulate the practice of engineering in Alberta, APEGA's membership has grown from 106 to over 63,000. Today, the Association's presence spans the province with offices in Edmonton and Calgary, and branches in the Calgary, Central Alberta, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Lakeland, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Peace River, Vermilion River and Yellowhead districts.

It was upon the petition of a group of geologists in 1960 that the provincial government amended its Professional Engineers Act to recognize geology and geophysics as distinct professions. The Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act acknowledged the uniqueness of the two professions.

The Engineering and/or Geoscience Act was again amended in 1999 to grant sufficiently experienced Registration Engineering Technologists the right to practice engineering as Registered Professional Technologists (Engineering) within a defined scope of practice. This was again amended in 2009 to change the Registered Professional Geologist designation to Professional Licensee.

Engineers now represent 86% of APEGA's membership; geoscientists make up 14%.

MEMBERS - THE KEY TO SUCCESS

The socio-technical demands characteristic of our ever changing society repeatedly test APEGA's commitment to excellence. The Association's success in adhering to this philosophic principle is measured by the quality of its end product - the members. Inspiring each individual to adopt excellence as a fundamental goal is the key to establishing a solid, credible foundation. APEGA challenges its members to play an active role in influencing the outcome of issues facing their profession. Members focus on concerns such as mandatory upgrading, development of a professional outlook, participation in community affairs outside the profession and greater involvement in Association matters. In all cases, the ultimate test of a decision is that the public interest is being served.

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